

hard they worked to achieve this ranking.

Under the direction of their dedicated and talented teacher, Mr. Matt Sanzone, the class spent the school year studying the history and principles of American democracy in preparation for the competition. Each student developed a broad understanding of the Constitution. The class also divided into smaller units to analyze in depth specific constitutional concepts.

The Marshwood team met its first challenge in March when it won the State-level competition and earned the right to represent Maine in the National Finals. Through simulated Congressional hearings, they demonstrated their knowledge of the Constitution before a panel of Maine Supreme Judicial Court justices, constitutional scholars, lawyers, and public officials.

The team's keen interest in our democracy serves as an example to other students in Maine and around the country. I know that these students will use the lessons they have learned in the classroom and in competition to guide them throughout their lives, to inspire others, and to be grateful for the rights and freedoms we enjoy as Americans. I congratulate these talented students from Maine on their extraordinary achievement.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD BLAU

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I rise along with my colleague, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, Senator SESSIONS, to pay tribute to Edward Blau, who is retiring at the end of this month after more than 32 years of distinguished service to the Congress at the Congressional Budget Office.

Since joining CBO's Scorekeeping Unit in 1982, Mr. Blau has worked side by side with the Budget Committee, helping us keep track of the status of legislation and committee allocations. As an all around expert on budget process and the Congress, Mr. Blau has been invaluable in helping the Budget Committee execute our responsibilities to the Senate.

Mr. Blau is well-regarded by both Democrats and Republicans for his tireless and diligent work—as well as his patient and easygoing manner. His attention to detail includes reviewing each and every Congressional Record to ensure that the database he maintains to help us with managing the Senate budget process is up-to-date at all times. It is an incredibly important task and one that we are grateful to Mr. Blau for his help in overseeing the past three decades.

In short, Mr. Blau exemplifies CBO's high standard of professionalism, objectivity, and nonpartisanship. In fact, he twice has received the CBO Director's Award, the agency's highest recognition for outstanding performance.

As chairman, I greatly appreciate the sacrifice that Mr. Blau has made in assisting the Budget Committee and the Congress. I wish him well in his future

endeavors, including, as I understand it, a plan to spend more time following in person his beloved Nationals—the other Washington baseball team.

I would like to now turn to my colleague, Senator SESSIONS, for his remarks.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank Chairman MURRAY and join her in commending Mr. Blau for his many years of dedicated and outstanding service to CBO, the Congress, and the American people. We wish him all the best in his well-deserved retirement.

We hope our colleagues will join us in thanking Mr. Blau—and really all of the hardworking employees at the Congressional Budget Office—for his and their service.

BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION ANNIVERSARY

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, on May 17, 1954, U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the unanimous ruling in the landmark civil rights case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. The Court declared segregation of public schools unconstitutional under the equal protection guaranteed by the 14th amendment. In delivering the opinion, Chief Justice Warren stated that “in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.” May 17, 2014, marks the 60th anniversary of the Supreme Court's landmark decision. This historic ruling began our great Nation down a path toward providing all children with equal access to education.

Education is a basic human right, and all students deserve equal access to education. I would like to acknowledge the courageous students who attended desegregated schools during the years following the ruling on *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. African-American students in the South endured verbal and physical abuse just for attending school. Their actions to attend desegregated schools not only demonstrate their remarkable bravery but also the importance of education.

Equal protection under the law is a fundamental right in our country. No one should suffer discrimination because of their race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Whether applying for a job, finding a home, eating in a restaurant, or attending school, we must ensure all citizens are treated fairly and equally. To me, the fight for equality is a fight for what it means to be American. That is why the 60th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, decision is so important. May 17, 1954, was a momentous day for the civil rights movement and moved America a step closer toward justice and equality for all.

Sixty years later, thanks to the Supreme Court's decision, students from all walks of life are guaranteed equal

access to public schools. Yet there is still more work to be done. Although 60 years have passed since the Court declared separate is never equal, many schools across our country remain divided by race and socioeconomic status. A child's access to a world-class education should not be determined by their ZIP code or parents' income. So, as our country reflects on the historic importance of the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, we must also look to the future, to continue the fight to ensure all children, regardless of race, have equal access to high quality education.

STRONG START FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, the question is not whether but how best to make early childhood education available to the largest number of children.

The approach that I am offering is quite different than the Democratic proposal.

Last year this time around, the Senate HELP Committee held a markup on another bill which was the Senate Democrats' proposal to reauthorize No Child Left Behind.

I said then that over the last decade, the combination of No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and the Obama administration's use of waivers has created a congestion of Federal mandates and rules that amount, in effect, to a national school board for elementary and secondary education.

The proposal that the HELP committee approved last year on a partisan vote would have “doubled down” on those mandates by setting performance standards, giving the Secretary of Education the authority to tell 100,000 public schools what their standards and tests should look like, how to measure their students' progress, and how to evaluate their teachers. And I said, then too, that if we wanted anyone to serve as chairman of the national school board, Arne Duncan would be a terrific one but Congress has said repeatedly that we don't want a national school board.

Unfortunately, the bill that Senate Democrats are proposing today has a familiar ring to it. It would, in effect, create a national school board for 3- and 4-year-olds.

It would spend \$27 billion in new funding over 5 years with Washington making the decisions about how States should run their preschool programs.

For example, it includes a lot of requirements for States that I don't think the Federal Government has ever even attempted with elementary and secondary education, such as: determining teacher salaries—that all preschool teachers be paid at a rate that is comparable to K-12 school teachers; class sizes, student-teacher ratios—class sizes can't be larger than 20 children, the ratio of students to teachers may be no higher than 10 to 1; length of